UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/45/PV.34
1 November 1990

ENGLISH

Forty-fifth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 24 October 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. de MARCO (Malta)

later: Mr. PEERTHUM (Mauritius)
(Vice-President)

- Tenth anniversary of the University for Peace: draft resolution A/45/L.10 [150]

- Operational activities for development [84]

  (a) Operational activities of the United Nations system: Observance of the fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development within the United Nations system

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

90-64274/A 2446V (E)

best copy available

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 150

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNIVERSITY FOR PEACE: DRAFT RESOLUTION A/45/L.10

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Costa Rica, who wishes to introduce draft resolution A/45/L.10.

Mr. TATTENBACH (Costa Rica) (interpretation from Spanish): It is a special honour for me today, on the happy occasion of United Nations Day, to inaugurate the Assembly's consideration of agenda item 150, "Tenth anniversary of the University for Peace". The University was established under General Assembly resolution 35/55 on 5 December 1980, for the purpose of disseminating knowledge aimed at training for peace.

The University's achievements and record since its establishment confirm the importance of the principle "If you seek peace, prepare for peace". That is the philosophical foundation upon which the University was built.

The continuance of war throughout human history and the constant threats to peace, as is demonstrated by the critical situation in the world today, force us to view peace no longer as a negative concept or as the conclusion of a conflict but, rather, as a fundamental and continuing obligation of each country and of the United Nations.

Today the international community must meet this challenge: how will it face the twenty-first century? A decision must be reached on how we are to shape our history in order to promote dynamic efforts towards peace. If education has been the ideal tool for the promotion of science and technology, it should also be the tool for the achievement of peace.

I should like, from the heart of Central America, to present to the Assembly the example of Esquipulas I and II, still relevant at the present time, during the term of office of our President, Rafael Angeo Calderon Fournier. These agreements deal with the pacification of the Central American region and not only reflect

(Mr. Tattenbach, Costa Rica)

the political elements of the conflicts, but are also the necessary instruments for economic, social, cultural and ecological development. That is to say, peace is being sought not only by averting war but also by preparing in a positive manner for an active peace. The United Nations Programme for the Development of Central America and the United Nations Development Programme have given us valuable aid in this endeavour.

When the General Assembly unanimously agreed to the establishment of the University for Peace, it did Costa Rica the honour of making it the host country. That action was taken as recognition of the role Costa Rica has played for many decades in advancing international co-operation and peace, especially through the United Nations. This was the first international institution established by the United Nations in Latin America.

In conformity with article 17 of its charter, the University has worked for the last 10 years to promote graduate studies and, specifically, it has developed two masters programmes for the benefit of students from five continents. Along these lines, the University has established a masters programme in communications for peace, which is taught at the headquarters in Costa Rica, and a masters programme in development and peace studies, which is taught in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, at the European Centre of the University. There is now an agreement with the Government of Colombia to establish in Bogota the University of Peace international centre for the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

In addition to these programmes, the University has organized conferences, seminars, short courses, and meetings in more than 17 countries emphasizing subjects at the core of the University's curriculum, especially in the areas of education for peace, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, negotiation skills, environment studies, human rights and international relations. In this sphere more than 15,000 people have been exposed to the University's messages.

(Mr. Tattenbach, Costa Rica)

The University has promoted research programmes emphasizing Central American issues. It has focused on a deeper understanding of refugee problems: issues relating to alternative communications in the region; the human rights situation and the possible creation of a Central American court of justice. It has also studied the possibility of declaring Central America a zone of peace. In the sphere of education for peace it is promoting new initiatives with the Ministries of Education of Central American countries.

The University for Peace has also co-operated in regional programmes with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

The University now includes a Centre for Information and Documentation for Peace (CEDIPAZ); the Gandhi Centre for Television Production; and the International Radio for Peace, transmitting 16 hours a day shortwave programmes in Spanish, English, French and German. In addition, many of the programmes of the United Nations Radio are also transmitted.

The new Rector of the University, Mr. Jaime Montalvo of Spain, with the support of my Government and the Government of Spain, is beginning a new phase of academic progress. In March of 1991 three master's programmes will be launched at the University, one in the area of international relations, co-operation and peace, another in the area of education for peace, and a third programme in natural resources, quality of life and peace, with students from many parts of the world. In 1992, two other master's programmes will begin, one in human rights and the other in peaceful conflict resolution.

(Mr. Tattenbach, Costa Rica)

At present, the University is conducting an intensive education programme in the Central American region and the Caribbean in the areas of peace, negotiation, communications and natural resources.

On the occasion of its tenth anniversary, it is organizing a round of high-level conferences on various topics, such as, for example: new development patterns on the eve of the twenty-first century; the role of Latin American women on the eve of the third millenium; prospects for a Central American community; and external debt and social debt in Latin America.

In the future the University will be a world publication centre on science, the arts and the practice of peace, and a place of free academic expression for world peace without limitations of any kind. It will also continue its work on the role and the central contribution of the communications media to peace. Finally, it will help UNESCO in its efforts to develop more appropriate comprehensive education for all of mankind.

I wish to express thanks for the co-operation received by the University for Peace from Governments and both governmental and non-governmental organizations, for without their support little could have been achieved. Special mention must be made of the Governments of Spain, Italy, Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Norway, Canada, Yugoslavia and Venezuela, which, together with the Government of Costa Rica, have contributed material resources to promote the work of this international institution.

I shall repeat here the recent words of the Foreign Minister of Costa Rica, Mr. Niehaus Quesada, before the Assembly:

"The spirit of conciliation should likewise be the basis for all world efforts in favour of peace. Costa Rica assigns a leading role to peace in the life of everyone. For the Costa Rican people this highest of values is

(Mr. Tattenbach, Costa Rica)

solidly founded on the fruitful basis of democracy. It is the focal point of our national life and the basic element in our foreign policy. It was in the belief that education for peace represents one of the principal instruments for guaranteeing the future of our species that we proposed the creation of the University for Peace, based in Costa Rica, which is now celebrating its tenth anniversary and to whose charter, approved by the General Assembly, we urge all Member States to adhere." (A/45/PV.5, p. 83)

We urge all nations to make best use of the University as one of our most valuable instruments, thus responding to the aspirations of young people and enabling them to prepare themselves and participate in this noble cause. We invite all nations to take advantage of the University as one of the most effective means to complement the efforts of every nation to organize education for peace.

To conclude, I shall introduce the draft resolution contained in document A/45/L.10, which my delegation sponsored, together with the delegations of Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cyprus, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Fiji, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Lichtenstein, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Saint Lucia, Samoa, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Togo, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Venezuela and Yugoslavia. We trust that this draft resolution will be favourably received by the General Assembly.

The first and second preambular paragraphs give a chronological account of the creation of the University and the various aspects of its work and activities pursuant to its mandate contained in resolution 35/55; this is emphasized in the third preambular paragraph. The last preambular paragraph and operative

(Mr. Tattenbach, Costa Rica)

paragraph 1 recall the tenth anniversary of the University. The sponsors believe that it is important to celebrate this anniversary, which marks a turning-point in the life of the institution. Operative paragraph 2 invites Member States to accede to the International Agreement for the Establishment of the University for Peace. Operative paragraph 3 appeals to Member States and governmental and non-governmental agencies which provide financial assistance for research to make financial contributions in order further to advance the objectives of the University.

Operative paragraph 4 requests the Secretary-General to establish an agreement on co-operation between the United Nations and the University for Peace in order to make greater use of the facilities and potential that the University can offer to the United Nations and its system, at the same time recognizing the University as an institution which is a legitimate part of the United Nations family since it was created by the world Organization.

Operative paragraph 5 expresses its appreciation to Costa Rica, the host country, for its valuable support and contribution to the operation of the University for Peace.

The last two operative paragraphs request the Secretary-General to transmit the present appeal to all Member States to gain their support and to report to the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session.

I therefore reiterate my request to representatives to lend their valuable support to our draft resolution, so that it may be adopted without a vote.

READEX FICHE

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/45/L.10. May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt the draft resolution?

Draft resolution A/45/L.10 was adopted (resolution 45/8).

The PRESIDENT: We have concluded our consideration of agenda item 150.

AGENDA ITEM 84

OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

(a) OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM: OBSERVANCE OF THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF MULTILATERAL TECHNICAL CO-OPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly, in accordance with the decision taken at its 3rd plenary meeting, will now observe the fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development within the United Nations system.

Forty years ago the first United Nations Technical Assistance Conference established the Expanded Programme of Technical Co-operation. This solemn act, signed by 54 States, represented the first steps towards an

"international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples"

called for in the Charter. It is fair to say 40 years after that multilateral technical co-operation provided by the United Nations has made a unique contribution and had an impact in developing countries.

The Expanded Programme of Technical Co-operation was created on the basis of a historic resolution of the Economic and Social Council - resolution 222 (IX) - endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 304/IV. This was followed up in 1959 with the creation of the United Nations Special Fund to undertake pre-investment work and feasibility studies. United Nations technical co-operation

(The President)

played an important role in the initial years of the newly independent countries, and the resources grew at a steady pace. By 1965 the United Nations Special Fund had attracted pledges of $422 million, which, in turn, helped generate over $1 billion in follow-up investment. In 1966 these programmes were merged into the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The United Nations Development Programme and other organs, organizations and bodies of the system engaged in technical co-operation have contributed to the war against poverty and offered developing countries an alternative to bilateral assistance. This alternative, with its special characteristics of universality, political neutrality and commercial disinterestedness, continues after 40 years to make a marked contribution to the development efforts of developing countries, as evidenced by the continuing trust put in it by its principal contributors and beneficiary countries.

On the fortieth anniversary, we acknowledge the dedication of many tens of thousands of men and women of over 160 nationalities who have carried out concrete and beneficial development programmes and projects in all developing countries of the world. We should also acknowledge the efforts and sacrifices of all the people in the developing world. We owe them an immense debt of gratitude.

Forty years are a relatively short period in the history of mankind; but during this period we have witnessed many momentous changes in the world. The expression "cold war" was still new to us when the 1950 Conference took place. Ahead lay a long period of tension, mutual distrust and the arms race. With the movement from East-West détente to entente, we believe that a new era of mutual understanding and co-operation is developing. Many think that we are on the way

(The President)

finally to realizing the concept set out in Article 26 of the United Nations Charter, namely:

"the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources".

As I pointed out in my opening statement to the General Assembly:

"I see no reason why the unprecedented progress in the political field should not be repeated in the economic and social area. At this forty-fifth session the General Assembly should take the initiative to exploit this unique opportunity. Would this not perhaps be the best and most appropriate way to mark the fortieth anniversary of United Nations technical co-operation?" (A/45/PV.1, p. 16)

Compared to initial investments, the returns of the technical co-operation programmes and projects are substantial. Technical co-operation deals with the human dimension, which is at the centre of development. Sustainable development requires increasingly skilled and adaptable human resources capable of meeting the challenges of the 1990s with the tools of the 1990s. Fundamental to development and technical co-operation is the transfer of know-how, skills and technology. This constitutes the basis and central factor in strengthening national capacity.

As we begin the fifth decade of international development co-operation, let us reaffirm the continued validity of the basic characteristics which have guided the United Nations in the field of technical co-operation over 40 years. In responding to the future challenges, the system will undoubtedly be guided by the fundamental notion that lasting development must reflect local realities rather than imported models and solutions.

I should also like to quote from the landmark Economic and Social Council resolution 222 (IX), adopted in August 1949, which became a corner-stone of the

(The President)

technical co-operation activities of the United Nations. The Economic and Social Council stated its belief:

> "that a sound international programme of this character must combine and make use of the experience of many nations, with different social patterns and cultural traditions and at different stages of development, so as to facilitate progress in the less-advanced countries and to help solve their technical and economic problems." (Economic and Social Council resolution 222 (IX))

That comprehensive principle formulated 40 years ago can still guide us today.

We know that development is a long-term process and progress is to be measured over a number of years. It is, therefore, gratifying to note that the decisions taken 40 years ago have been supported by financial co-operation encompassing all countries on an entirely voluntary basis.

(The President)

Technical co-operation activities have come a very long way from an initial annual pledge of $20 million to a current amount of over $1 billion for UNDP alone. Starting with three Field Offices in Colombia, Turkey and Yugoslavia, the number has grown to 112, with the most recent one being the Namibia Office.

Although the United Nations system of multilateral technical co-operation is in place and functioning well, additional resources are essential if it is to respond more aggressively and effectively to the needs of the developing countries, particularly the least developed among them. We should exploit today's unique international environment to channel increased resources for development.

The financial resources and sacrifices that are rightly being committed to re-establish the international order greatly disturbed by the invasion of Kuwait will, it is hoped, in the future be committed to break the poverty curtain that has long descended over a large portion of humanity and is the greatest potential cause of disturbance of international order and peace.

Anniversary celebrations have a way of going stale unless a message is conveyed, a policy is underlined, a dedication to the future is pledged. In the wisdom of the East many a message is to be found. United Nations technical co-operation is epitomized in the old Chinese proverb that states: "Give a man a fish to eat and you have fed him for a day; teach him how to fish and you have fed him for a lifetime".

I feel that freedom for the peoples of the world can be achieved only if such resources are made available as soon as possible.

I believe that this fortieth anniversary is the occasion of a renewed commitment to change the life of those suffering from hunger and want and give them the most fundamental of rights: the right to live in dignity, the right to see their children grow in health and the right to see their land free of disease and famine.

(The President)

I call on the Secretary-General.

The SECRETARY-GENERAL: As we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development, we can be justifiably proud of the achievements throughout the world of the United Nations development system.

The last 40 years have witnessed remarkable progress in many developing countries, particularly in the field of human development. Average life expectancy has increased by 16 years, adult literacy by 40 per cent and per capita nutritional levels by over 20 per cent, while child mortality rates have been halved. Yet, despite this progress, almost one out of every four people in the developing world is still trapped in the vicious cycle of absolute poverty.

One of the major challenges for the United Nations system in the 1990s must be the eradication of poverty and the promotion and consolidation of human development. People must be at the centre of all development efforts; they are both the means and the ends of development. To quote Paul Hoffman, the first Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP):

> "It is poverty of opportunity, rather than just poverty itself, which causes so much suffering and discontent. Given better health, better education, better training, tens of millions of people now relatively ineffective could contribute greatly to moving their countries from poverty and stagnation to self-propelling economic growth."

I speak today on behalf of the over 220,000 internationally recruited staff and the vastly greater number of locally recruited colleagues who, since 1950, have striven to share their knowledge, skills and experience in support of the development efforts of developing countries. They are at the heart of the development programmes of the United Nations system in all parts of the world. As agents of international co-operation for development, they form the key link in the chain of world-wide international co-operation, involving people and institutions

(The Secretary-General)

in projects aimed at resolving specific development problems. I wish to pay homage to these "blue helmets" for development, men and women of 164 nationalities who are dedicated to helping people to help themselves, often in difficult circumstances.

When the system of multilateral technical co-operation was created 40 years ago, few could have foreseen the magnitude of the task ahead or how technical co-operation would evolve. In 1950 fewer than 10 implementing agencies of the United Nations system were providing their intellectual and administrative support for multilateral technical co-operation. Currently, the number is over 30. The comparative advantage of the United Nations system is in large measure a result of the work of these organizations, which provide universal access to skills, technology and resources. The neutral nature of the assistance, provided in the form of grants, and its universality continue to be the core of the United Nations development system.

The system has continuously evolved and adjusted to the changing requirements of developing countries. From the creation of the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance in 1950, the subsequent establishment of the Special Fund for large-scale pre-investment and institution-building activities, their merger to form the United Nations Development Programme in 1965 and the adoption of the consensus resolution of 1970, the nature and structure of international development co-operation changed significantly.

While, in the early years, technical co-operation often consisted of discrete, individual activities, the consensus of 1970 created the country programme, formulated by Governments based on their national development plans, priorities and objectives. Firmly anchored in the tripartite concept, the consensus ascribed to organizations of the system the role of partners, having first, though not exclusive, consideration as executing agents.

(The Secretary-General)

With the adoption in 1975 of the resolution on new dimensions in technical co-operation, yet more flexibility was introduced in response to changing needs and conditions. The basic purpose of technical co-operation as defined then still rings true today: to promote the self-reliance of developing countries through national capacity-building. And it is increasingly recognized that human development - meaning more choices for people so that they have more control over their own lives - promotes self-reliance.

In 1977 the General Assembly decided that overall responsibility for the co-ordination of the operational activities of the United Nations system at the country level be entrusted to a single official, the Resident Co-ordinator.

(The Secretary-General)

It has since called for intensified efforts to strengthen the programming process, to increase the effectiveness of the system's field representation, to enhance the capacity of Governments to implement programmes and projects and to reinforce the team-leadership capacity of the Resident Co-ordinator. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, working with colleagues through the whole system, in particular the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, and in the light of the views of Member States, is pursuing these crucial objectives.

The Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme and other intergovernmental bodies have recently taken important decisions that will significantly affect the way in which projects are implemented. As a result there is likely to be even greater flexibility in the provision of development services, without impairing the inherent advantages of the system.

The substantive, advisory role of the system and its standard-setting and research activities are likely to take on new importance as developing countries decide to give priority to strengthening their national capacities in areas such as poverty eradication, grass-roots participation in development, protection of the environment, national resources management, technical co-operation among developing countries, transfer and adaptation of technology, and women in development. The United Nations development system, with its accumulated experience, is ideally fitted to undertake these tasks.

Much, however, remains to be done. The symbiotic relationship between enduring peace and the economic and social well-being of people is well recognized. Development co-operation can have a crucial impact on the lives of people, thus contributing to the promotion of international peace and security.

At this historic moment, when remarkable political changes are sweeping the world, let us rededicate ourselves to a better future for all people. Let us work

(The Secretary-General)

for a peace with justice that opens up more and better possibilities for all, meets the fundamental needs of the most deprived, furthers the development of nations, particularly the least-developed, and places human beings at the centre of its concerns. In this context, I believe that the United Nations development system can make a very important contribution.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone, who will speak on behalf of the Group of African States.

Mr. KARGBO (Sierra Leone): For many of us in the developing countries, especially in Africa, the coming years will be crucial in determining the course that our societies will take: whether we shall forge ahead, achieving some measure of modest growth, or continue to wallow in the economic doldrums. Certain patterns of co-operation must be given priority if gains are to be realized. Greater attention will increasingly be required in those areas where the most productive results can be achieved.

During much of its existence the United Nations has stressed the efficacy of multilateral co-operation as meeting the requirements for economic development. It has shaped the way we have come to understand the dynamics of social progress in an often hostile international environment. The work of the specialized agencies and the international institutions have been instrumental not only in breaching the cycle of deprivation and poverty, but also in raising the hopes and expectations of countless millions of people - the building blocks of their different communities - whose lives have been touched by their operations.

There is now clear evidence that this achievement, significant as it is, could have been maximized with a much greater commitment to a broader-based effort by much of the developed world. The anticipation of substantial growth in the 1960s and 1970s was undercut by a retreat from multilateral ventures by key partners in

(Mr. Kargbo, Sierra Leone)

the development process. It resulted in the 1980s in a marginalization of the costly efforts made by so many of our Governments, jeopardizing those sectors of society which were already vulnerable.

These lessons have been painfully learned. They have provided an incentive to our Governments to put a higher priority on national capacity-building. By so doing we have focused our energies on tapping the rich physical and human potential that we have available. Indeed, our determination can be seen by our commitment to the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990.

Over the years, the international community has come to realize that the furtherance of social and economic development is critical to the overall objectives of the Organization. The cyclical episodes of natural disasters, crop failures, climatic hazards compounded by man-made obstacles to trade and resource-flows, and the pandemic debt crisis have led to chronic poverty, have weakened social institutions and have induced severely reduced economic management capacity, with a much more serious impact on the least developed of our countries.

The far-reaching implications for international peace and stability engendered by these conditions of underdevelopment have overturned the conventional wisdom which had hitherto dictated international economic prescriptions. It became obvious that no assurances could be given about the success of efforts to reduce tension and prevent conflict if conditions of deprivation were allowed to fester. Like nations, the international community cannot sustain indefinitely the existence of parallel societies - one affluent, the other deprived - without risking serious global instability.

It is against this background that we must take stock of 40 years of multilateral technical co-operation. It is not a tale of woe that we must recite. The clock cannot be turned back, nor can missed opportunities be recaptured.

(Mr. Kargbo, Sierra Leone)

However, the future offers many chances for redress, for greater participation and stronger commitment by all of us to improve the human condition rapidly. We in Africa have taken many steps in this direction, the most recent being the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation, adopted by our Ministers responsible for economic planning and development in May this year and contained in document A/45/427.

What is now imperative is the emplacement of new, innovative and productive patterns of interaction between the members of the international community reflecting the emerging international political reality from which so much is expected. A renewed commitment to the activities of the multilateral institutions, encouraging an acceleration of the development process, is strongly required. Indeed, as the Secretary-General observes accurately in his report on the work of the Organization,

> "The renewal of multilateralism will enhance the capacity of the United Nations to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the post-cold-war international order". (A/45/1, p. 27)

The activities of the intergovernmental agencies will continue to be critical in the vanguard of institution-building for economic progress and social transformation. In the rapidly changing world we live in today, the demands that will be placed on these agencies will be heavy as we turn our attention to more seriously alleviating poverty and enhancing social justice world wide. Will they be up to the task? Will we be willing to use them to meet the challenges that are now imminent? These are the questions we must all answer, for we can no longer put off the realization of our common objectives under Chapter IX of the Charter.

(Mr. Kargbo, Sierra Leone)

On behalf of the African Group, I should like to take this opportunity to pay a deserved tribute to the multilateral institutions whose activities in the varied fields of human endeavour testify to the best in our vision of hope and quest for a brighter future.

As we observe this anniversary, we should strengthen our determination to work together to bring closer the achievement of a global society in which the improvement of the human condition is the centre-piece of those larger freedoms enshrined in the Charter.

The PRESIDENT: I call next on the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. EL-FATTAL (Syrian Arab Republic): We are gathered here today, in this Assembly, to commemorate an important event in the history of the Organization - the fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development within the United Nations system. That we do so on a special day in the calendar of the world body. United Nations Day, bears testimony to the importance that we all attach to the occasion.

The founding of the United Nations at the end of the Second World War was a triumph for hope over despair. It symbolized our faith in ourselves and in our ability to control our destiny, if we took good care. We hoped to build, through the United Nations, a world of lasting peace and true security, in which nations could devote their energies to promoting the well-being of their peoples. We hoped to build a world in which co-operation among nations flourished in the diverse fields of human endeavour, in place of confrontation on the fields of battle. Our aspirations remain unrealized. But the United Nations must stand as a beacon of hope - even if we stumble occasionally and are reminded of man's innate failings - so that one day our dream may be fulfilled.

Forty years ago, the United Nations took the first step towards giving concrete shape to the vision of global co-operation that inspired its founding fathers. It established an institutional mechanism for multilateral technical co-operation in the United Nations system - the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance (EPTA) - under a resolution that had been adopted by the General Assembly the previous year. By so doing, the United Nations began a process that would gain enormous vigour and vitality in the fullness of time. That may have been a small initial step, but it was destined to leave a significant mark, over

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

the years, on the process of development in the developing countries.

Multilateral technical co-operation activities of the United Nations system have developed enormously in the 40 years since the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance began its operations in 1950. In that year, EPTA disbursed $20 million. That has grown almost one hundredfold in the past 40 years.

The setting up in 1958 of a Special Fund to meet certain urgent needs for pre-investment aid, marked the next stage in the evolution of multilateral technical co-operation. The rapid increase in the demand for technical assistance in the early 1960s in the wake of decolonization in Africa, led to the merging of the Special Fund with EPTA in 1966 to create the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The establishment of the United Nations Trust Fund for Population Activities in 1967, later renamed the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), was yet another milestone on that road of development through technical co-operation.

The consensus resolution of 1970 which introduced, inter alia, country programming, is another landmark in this regard. It enabled developing countries to incorporate into their national planning the indicative planning figures of assistance that they could expect to receive from the UNDP over their plan period. In many countries, this reinforced the process of planning for socio-economic development and led to planning being accorded a high priority in the development process.

The importance of technical co-operation for development can hardly be overstated. Multilateral technical co-operation activities of the United Nations system have contributed to the efforts of the developing countries to achieve self-reliance in several ways - among others, through facilitating and supporting

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

investment, research, training and national capacity-building. Technical co-operation programmes and projects have helped the developing countries to establish a more effective framework for development. They have enabled greater use of disposable human, physical and financial resources and played an important role in helping to establish and strengthen institutions in developing countries and to expand productivity. One piece of evidence in support of this, is the fact that developing countries are better able today to pool and share their experiences and engage in technical and economic co-operation among themselves for their mutual benefit.

Thanks to the technical co-operation activities of the United Nations system, developing countries have acquired and improved their skills in many fields, spanning sectors such as agriculture, water supply, sanitation, health, education, public administration, vocational and technical instruction, community development, housing and urban development. Developing countries have also benefited from the application of modern technological research methods to development problems and production techniques.

It is not often appreciated that technical co-operation activities have an enormous impact on the development process of a country that goes far beyond the rather modest sums actually invested in such co-operation. It is reasonable to believe that through this multiplier effect, technical co-operation activities of the United Nations system have stimulated billions of dollars worth of follow-up investment from public and private sources and thereby contributed very considerably to the development of developing countries.

While there is no gainsaying that there has been improvement in the standards of living and well-being of millions of people around the world in the past

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

40 years, it must be said that we have merely scratched the surface in meeting the challenge of development. Hundreds of millions of human beings still live in abysmal poverty in the developing countries. The problems of their growth and development remain as daunting as ever.

Developing countries are under no illusion that there is any quick and easy path to development. It will take decades of toil on their part before they can hope to shake off the scourge of poverty and deprivation. But the process of growth and development must be revitalized if they are to have hope.

(Mr. El-Fattal, Syrian Arab Republic)

The world cannot be unconcerned with the future of the overwhelming majority of human beings. That would be morally reprehensible. In this increasingly interdependent world, it would also be bad policy. At some future point, want and deprivation in large parts of our world could seriously threaten affluence in other parts. Let us not test the limits within which poverty and riches can safely coexist.

Multilateral technical co-operation activities of the United Nations system must continue to play a catalytic role in the development process of the developing countries. Indeed, such activities must be considerably stepped up if we are to confront seriously the challenge of development. There needs to be, therefore, a substantial increase in resources provided for this purpose. The donor countries, in particular those whose level of official development assistance is incommensurate with the agreed targets, should make a real and significant increase in resources for technical co-operation activities for development. They should do so, as agreed at the last session of the General Assembly, on a continuous, predictable and assured basis.

Promoting self-reliance through development of human resources is indispensable to development. The United Nations system must redouble its efforts to support that process in the coming decades.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Poland, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. PAWLAK (Poland): The fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development, which the United Nations celebrates this year, is a very special occasion for all of us. It is a time to look back to four decades of development co-operation - to its achievements and setbacks, its struggles and triumphs. But it is also a time to look forward to the future challenges related

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

to offering people more options to improve their standard of living, political freedom, human rights and further overall development.

Our celebration takes place in a year of unprecedented events in the political arena. It looks like we have finally reached a stage where the importance of multilateral technical co-operation has been fully recognized and put to work for the benefit of mankind. In this regard we share the optimism expressed by others to the effect that neutrality and universality - the two major comparative advantages of United Nations technical co-operation - will be increasingly in demand in the years to come.

Earlier this year we witnessed two important events scheduled to celebrate the fortieth anniversary. The first was the launching of the Human Development Report in May 1990; the second, a celebration which took place within the framework of the June session of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme. Now it is time to commemorate United Nations Day, 24 October 1990. We are convinced that all those activities will contribute to strengthening the public image of the United Nations in general and of the United Nations Development Programme and other participating organizations in particular.

There is no doubt that the beginning of the 1990s has brought a new mood of international co-operation. Many development problems require global action and an effective response. The potential of multilateral technical co-operation within the United Nations system is promising. With the growing support from Governments and non-governmental institutions the international community seems to be well-equipped to face the new challenges of human development and sustainable growth in all the regions of our globe.

(Mr. Pawlak, Poland)

The Eastern European States are in the process of deep political and socio-economic transformations that are creating favourable conditions for our broader participation in this international co-operation, thus contributing to a more effective use of technical co-operation projects and undertakings at the national, regional, interregional and global levels.

In conclusion, I wish on this special occasion to express our appreciation and sincere congratulations to all those, who for the past 40 years have been contributing to the unquestionable success and numerous achievements of the multilateral technical co-operation within the United Nations system. I firmly believe that the positive experience of the past will inspire all the parties concerned to undertake new and innovative efforts in this important field of development activities for the benefit of all peoples in need.

The PRESIDENT: I now call on the representative of Bolivia, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. NAVAJAS MOGRO (Bolivia) (interpretation from Spanish): The Assembly is meeting today for reasons of special significance to the developing countries.

Forty years ago our Organization decided to give practical expression to Article 55 of the Charter, which very wisely foresaw what is today the universally accepted doctrine establishing a causal relationship between peace, security and friendship among nations and the promotion of higher standards of living and well-being for all, as well as the solution of international economic and social problems: in sum, the promotion of what we today call economic and social development.

This commemoration, quite rightly taking place on United Nations Day, not only recalls an historical turning-point; it should also provide a timely opportunity both to remember the multilateral technical co-operation of the United Nations

(Mr. Navajas Mogro, Bolivia)

system, which has remained in a consistent pattern of growth since its modest origins in 1950, and to stop and think about the present and try to glimpse the future.*

In recalling the past, it is only fair to remember with gratitude and appreciation those visionary people who did so much to ensure that technical co-operation - now co-operation for development - should emerge as a living reality of the ideals of the Charter and be strengthened through years of faithful and determined endeavours to become so much greater in quantitative terms and to incorporate fundamental principles of international co-operation subject only to the will of countries and their sovereign right to choose their own style and priorities of development.

---

* Mr. Peerthum (Mauritius), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Navajas Mogro, Bolivia)

We pay a tribute to the memory of David Owen, Manuel Perez Guerrero and Paul Hoffmann, to name but a few; we remember also Hernan Santa Cruz, Hugh Keenleyside, Sir Robert Jackson and Bradford Morse, to name those who are not at present heading programmes of co-operation for development.

Between the modest beginnings of the first Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance and its organizational bodies, the administration and the Technical Assistance Board and the present, when the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) can be said to be a very substantive, universal, indispensable international body, there have been times of faith, excitement, enthusiasm, and also despair. Today the Programme, our Programme, rests on solid, although still insufficient, financial foundations. Its activities encompass all developing countries and cover the wide range of their problems of growth. But, beyond this, the Programme is based also on considerations of international ethics, on the conviction that it is not morally acceptable, nor is it in the final analysis economically sustainable, that side by side with a prosperous one third of mankind there should coexist an impoverished two thirds.

There can thus be no greater recognition of the success and relevance of multilateral co-operation than our concern about it, the fact that we are not indifferent to its shortcomings and frustrations in the face of the vast problems of development that beset us. It is true that co-operation for development has grown and strengthened, and that no country, developed or developing, can ignore it without turning its back on its responsibilities and its own interests. It is no less true that, 40 years on, the general picture of development is deplorable and that since the beginning of this decade the economies of most developing countries have been sliding ever faster downhill, with the tragic sequel of the impoverishment and abandonment of broad sectors of the populations reaching unacceptable limits.

(Mr. Navajas Mogro, Bolivia)

Development depends on many factors, endogenous and exogenous to the developing countries. Among them there is a scenario that favours international co-operation if that is understood to mean not simply providing sufficient funds for co-operation - and funds have been insufficient in the past and are even more so today - but rather creating a climate favourable to unhindered international trade, investment, an adequate flow of financial resources to alleviate the crushing burden of external debt, and, ultimately, the creation of a framework of macroeconomic policies and practices that favour development instead of being prejudicial to it.

We must not forget that, together with the unfulfilled promises to contribute a certain proportion - 0.7 per cent - of the domestic product of the developed countries to offical development assistance, we are now faced with the absurd situation in which, from 1982 to 1989 alone, the South transferred to the North $1.235 billion more than it received from the North. In other words, we have become net contributors.

However, this is a time not for recriminations but rather for celebration and faith. Much has been done and a long road has been travelled, although there is still a long way to go. But we must believe that the ideal, the principle, is to be found in that seed that began to grow 40 years ago, and that today finds splendid expression in the reality of our development programmes. We must nourish that plant carefully and faithfully, devoting our efforts to fulfilling the solemn commitments which unite all countries in support of development and which this year found their true expression in the Declaration of the eighteenth special session of the General Assembly, on international co-operation and development, the commitments of the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade.

(Mr. Navajas Mogro, Bolivia)

The countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, on whose behalf I have the honour of speaking, urge that this occasion be seen as an opportunity to renew the solemn commitment made by all of us, by all countries, to the principle that development and well-being cannot be the privilege of a few without jeopardizing the very foundations of international coexistence; they urge that, at this time of justified celebration of the destruction of the political walls and barriers that used to divide the world, we also dedicate ourselves to the task of pulling down the ominous wall that divides the international community into a prosperous North and an impoverished South.

The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of Canada, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. FORTIER (Canada): I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States in commemorating the fortieth anniversary of mulilateral co-operation. In establishing in 1949 the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance, a forerunner of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the General Assembly gave concrete expression to the determination expressed in the Charter to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social and humanitarian character.

The early emphasis on technical assistance, as it was then called, was insightful, as it denoted a recognition of the need to foster human capacities as an essential element of the development process. While preoccupation with capital needs later dwarfed the financial scale of technical co-operation activities, we have seen in recent years a broad recognition of the centrality of the human dimension to the development process. It is entirely appropriate that the UNDP is supporting pioneering work, as seen from the human development report, in deepening our understanding of this.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

It is well understood that the UNDP has a central place in our system of technical co-operation as the principal financing channel. It is important also to acknowledge the very significant role played by the technical and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, which are partners of the UNDP and the Population Fund and the beneficiary countries in designing and implementing our programmes.

That the United Nations system for technical co-operation is so highly valued, despite its very small share of overall development assistance flows, is due in part to its particular characteristices of neutrality, universality, responsiveness and voluntary participation. While these characteristics remain essential, the programmes must adapt to new challenges and to lessons learned from past experience. To remain a vital partner for development in the 1990s, the system will need more than ever to sharpen its focus on measures which help to enable people to shape their own social and economic destinies.

(Mr. Fortier, Canada)

Over the last few years, Governments acting through the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Governing Council of the UNDP, have initiated a process of reform in the technical co-operation programmes of the United Nations system. The main objectives of this reform are to direct resources to those most in need, to encourage discipline in United Nations programming, to re-orient technical and specialized agencies to technical functions, and to encourage more integrated and substantive functioning of the system at the country level. While many of these changes deal with bureaucratic processes, the underlying theme is the need to be effective by tackling well those issues which the United Nations system is best equipped to address. Many of these fall under the rubric of human development. Revised models of technical co-operation which seek to combat poverty and enlarge people's choices by enlisting grass roots movements must complement the traditional model of co-operation with public sectors. Assisting countries to pursue development in harmony with nature is also a mounting part of the vocation of United Nations technical co-operation programmes.

There can be no doubt that the international community as a whole benefits from our collective efforts to support the development process. As a community, we have conceived diverse and technically rich institutional instruments which can co-operate in the development effort. We are on the threshold of an immense opportunity for development as East-West tensions subside and as substance replaces posture in the dialogue between developed and developing countries. It is our common responsibility to ensure that the instruments we have created remain effective means of displaying human solidarity through international economic and technical co-operation.

The PRESIDENT: I declare concluded the observance of the fortieth anniversary of multilateral technical co-operation for development within the United Nations system.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.